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Finding aid of the Paul T. Minerich Papers

Collection number: 2003.229.1

Japanese American National Museum
Los Angeles, California

Processed by:

Marlon Romero

Date Completed:

2008

Encoded by:

Marlon Romero

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Paul T. Minerich papers

Dates: 1944-1998

Languages: English

Collection number: 2003.229.1

Creator: Minerich, Paul T.

Collection Size: 1.5 linear feet

Repository: Japanese American National Museum (Los Angeles, Calif.)

Los Angeles, California 90012

Abstract: The Paul T. Minerich Papers document the court cases of draft resisters who were court-martialed in 1944 in Ft. McClellan, Alabama. The resisters, also known as DB Boys (Detention Barracks Boys), were court-martialed and sentenced to a dishonorable discharge and forfeiture of pay. In 1981 their sentences were overturned. The papers comprise of court-martial documents, correspondences, and notes that were collected by their lawyers, Charles Edmund Zane and Paul T. Minerich.

Physical location: Japanese American National Museum 369 East First Street Los Angeles, CA 90012

Access

Collection is open for research by appointment. Please contact the Japanese American National Museum's Manabi and Sumi Hirasaki National Resource Center at (213) 830-5680 or hncr@janm.org to schedule an appointment. The Resource Center hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Paul T. Minerich papers. 2003.229.1, Japanese American National Museum. Los Angeles, CA.

Project Information

This finding aid was created as part of a project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project started in 2007. Project Director was Cris Paschild. Project Archivists were Yoko Shimojo and Marlon Romero.

Biography / Administrative History

The Paul T. Minerich papers document the court cases of draft resisters who were court-martialed in 1944 in Ft. McClellan, Alabama. The resisters were court-martialed for refusing to be trained for combat while their families were incarcerated in concentration camps. On March 20, 1944, forty-three infantry trainees were ordered to march to a field house to hear an orientation by their training commander. The group began to march, but soon stopped and refused to continue. A soldier was ordered to take the names of those who had disobeyed orders, but they refused to identify themselves and were placed under arrest. Twenty-one of these men were eventually convicted and tried for violating the 64th Article of War (willfully disobeying a direct order by a superior commissioned officer). The resisters, also known as the DB Boys (Detention Barrack Boys), were sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, a forfeiture of pay, and confinement to hard labor for 5 to 30 years. In November 1945, their sentences were reduced by a special clemency action and in 1946 they were put on parole and released.

Immediately after their release Charles Edmund Zane (a lawyer and high school friend to resister Masao Kataoka) began to write briefs in defense of the injustice done to the DB boys. As early as 1946, Zane submitted applications to the Army Board for the Correction of Military Records for a hearing to convince the board that the verdicts of the court martial be reversed. In May 1949, the men were informed that the hearing would not be granted. Despite the dismissal of the court, Zane continued his legal research by writing to different government agencies and requesting court records in hopes of an eventual court hearing.

In the 1980s, over thirty years after the DB Boys trial, Paul T. Minerich (an attorney and son-in-law of resister, Tim Nomiya) continued the DB Boys case. In January 1981, the Army changed the sentences for 11 of the 21 resisters dishonorable discharge to honorable discharge. The remaining ten did not wish to change their status. The eleven men then testified before the Army Board for the Correction of Military Records and, in February 1982, the board ordered that they receive credit toward active service for the years that they were confined after their court martial. The Board also changed the record to show that they had been honorably discharged due to expiration of their enlistment rather than release from their confinement. What Zane started in the 1940s, Minerich resumed and finished in the 1980s during an era of Japanese American redress and reparations.

Resisters (DB Boys)

Hamai, Shigeo
Hayakawa, Kenjiro
Hirouchi, Frank F.
Ishiyama, Yoshikuzu
Itano, Henry
Kataoka, Masao
Mitsuhiro, Mitsuru
Morinaka, Henry
Morita, Masuo
Murata, Harold
Nakamura, Richard Tatsuo
Nomiya, Tim T.
Nozawa, Hakubun (Hugh)
Ogawa, Ben B.
Okamoto, Masami J.
Oyama, Masao
Sakuma, Sasayuki
Sumida, Masao
Sumoge, Fred Fumio
Taniguchi, Katsumi
Tsunehara, Harold T.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Paul T. Minerich Papers is divided into two series: Charles E. Zane, 1944-1954 and Paul Minerich, 1980-1998.

Series 1: Charles E. Zane, 1944-1954

The Zane papers contain three sub-series: Court-Martial Documents, Correspondences, and Notes.

The Court-Martial Documents are arranged chronologically with the bulk of the documents being trial records for ten of the resisters. The trial records are arranged alphabetically by the resisters' last names. Correspondences are divided into three folder titles: Zane with the DB Boys, Zane with the Government and various institutions, and the Government with the DB Boys. Each folder is arranged chronologically.

Correspondence with no dates are located at the end of the folder. Some of the papers are duplicate copies and rough drafts of letters that were handwritten and then typewritten. In the Correspondences sub-series there is also a compiled copy of letters Zane sent to government agencies including a letter to President Harry S. Truman.

The Notes sub-series contains court notes and research notes including a few newspaper clippings.

Series 2: Paul T. Minerich, 1980-1998

The Minerich papers contain three sub-series: Court-Martial Documents, Correspondences, and Audio-Visual Materials.

The Court-Martial Documents contain the transcript of the 1982 hearing and settlement records from the United States Army Finance and Accounting Center.

Correspondences are divided into four folder titles: Minerich with the DB Boys, Minerich with the Government and various institutions, the Government with the DB Boys, and personal statements from the DB Boys. Each folder is arranged chronologically. Included in the sub-series are written statements by the resisters chronicling their life history as well as letters between Paul Minerich and Aiko Herzig, John Tateishi, Sen. Daniel Inouye, Sen. Spark Matsunaga, Author Frank Chuman, Producer Loni Ding, and the National Museum of American.

The Audio-Visual Materials sub-series contains video interviews of the DB Boys and their wives that share their experiences before, during, and after the war. The materials include the original set of VHS copies, 1 set of DV cam copies, and two sets of DVD access copies.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Hamai, Shigeo
Hayakawa, Kenjiro
Hirouchi, Frank F.
Ishiyama, Yoshikuzu
Itano, Henry
Kataoka, Masao
Mitsuhiro, Mitsuru
Morinaka, Henry
Morita, Masuo
Murata, Harold
Nakamura, Richard Tatsuo
Nomiya, Tim T.
Nozawa, Hakubun
Ogawa, Ben B.
Okamoto, Masami J.
Oyama, Masao
Sakuma, Sasayuki
Sumida, Masao
Sumoge, Fred Fumio
Taniguchi, Katsumi
Tsunehara, Harold T.

Box 1

Series 1 Charles E. Zane 1944-1954

Physical Description: 1 linear feet

Series Scope and Content Summary

The Zane papers contain three sub-series: Court-Martial Documents, Correspondences, and Notes.

Box 1

Subseries 1.1 Court-Martial Documents 1944-1954

Physical Description: 14 folders

Subseries Scope and Content Summary

The Court-Martial Documents are arranged chronologically with the bulk of the documents being trial records for ten of the resisters. The trial records are arranged alphabetically by the resisters' last names.

Record of Trial

Application for Correction of Military Records

Power of Attorney Papers

Congressional Record of the 82nd Congress

Petition for New Trial

Box 2

Subseries 1.2 **Correspondences 1944-1952**

Physical Description: 5 folders

Subseries Scope and Content Summary

Correspondences are divided into three folder titles: Zane with the DB Boys, Zane with the Government and various institutions, and the Government with the DB Boys. Each folder is arranged chronologically. Correspondence with no dates are located at the end of the folder. Some of the papers are duplicate copies and rough drafts of letters that were handwritten and then typewritten. In the Correspondences sub-series there is also a compiled copy of letters Zane sent to government agencies including a letter to President Harry S. Truman.

Government with DB Boys
Government and various institutions
DB Boys

Box 2

Subseries 1.3 **Notes**

Physical Description: 1 folder

Subseries Scope and Content Summary

The Notes sub-series contains court notes and research notes including a few newspaper clippings.

Box 3

Series 2 **Paul T. Minerich 1980-1998**

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet

Series Scope and Content Summary

The Minerich papers contain three sub-series: Court-Martial Documents, Correspondences, and Audio-Visual Materials.

Box 3

Subseries 2.1 **Court-Martial Documents 1980-1984**

Physical Description: 5 folders

Subseries Scope and Content Summary

The Court-Martial Documents contain the transcript of the 1982 hearing and settlement records from the United States Army Finance and Accounting Center.

Secretarial Review of Punitive Discharge
Honorable Discharge Documents
Transcript of Trial Hearing
USAFAC settlement records
Request for Military Records

Box 3

Subseries 2.2 **Correspondences 1980-1998**

Physical Description: 4 folders

Subseries Scope and Content Summary

Correspondences are divided into four folder titles: Minerich with the DB Boys, Minerich with the Government and various institutions, the Government with the DB Boys, and personal statements from the DB Boys. Each folder is arranged chronologically. Included in the sub-series are written statements by the resisters chronicling their life history as well as letters between Paul Minerich and Aiko Herzig, John Tateishi, Sen. Daniel Inouye, Sen. Spark Matsunaga, Author Frank Chuman, Producer Loni Ding, and the National Museum of American.

Government with DB Boys
Government and various institutions

DB Boys

Personal statements from DB Boys

Box 3

Subseries 2.3 **Audio-Visual Materials 1984**

Physical Description: 1 folder

Subseries Scope and Content Summary

The Audio-Visual Materials sub-series contains video interviews of the DB Boys and their wives that share their experiences before, during, and after the war. The materials include the original set of VHS copies, 1 set of DV cam copies, and two sets of DVD access copies.

DB Boys

DB Wives